

NEW AIR

rain

on and off, falling through thin
trees and their small jittery leaves.
and the wind, it's throwing
the tops of the trees around,
against a dark purple sky
staging distant thunderstorms
which never seem to get any closer.
a cold front is expected to
come down from canada by dawn,
and to welcome it the upstairs
windows will be left open.
i want the cold to greet me
when i wake.
this late-august mugginess
has been almost too
suffocating to bear.
i fully expect
the old cotton
curtains upstairs to
come back to life,
and maybe if i'm lucky
the new air might help
rejuvenate my own
fragile ability
to deal
with things.

A POET

good night for pissing outside:

full moon at the front of the house
showering pearly-blue light over the back field.
katydids gone, or at least quiet, and
the only sound is that of a weak and very
unenthusiastic cricket, which must be
poor at letting go of what is lost.
mid-september, and for almost two weeks
autumn has been making some serious inroads.
if i walk out into the field far enough
i can see the moon cruising over pines
on the other side of the road, where
the mailbox stands empty as an unneeded
and forgotten shoe box. slamming
the back door i frighten deer away from
under the apple tree where the pickings
are rich. i'm a bit drunk, and
feebly let out with a yell, desperate.
almost, to inform them that i am
completely harmless.

i cannot tell whether they
hear me or not; all i know
is that if they do,
then they just don't believe me.
they don't trust me.
this, for a poet,
is scary.

OUT IN THE LATE OCTOBER GARDEN

out in the late october garden,
my father says he's been careful not to
disturb any of the raised beds when putting
down fertilizer, not wanting to cave in
any of the tunnels of the worms, his precious,
dear worms. i was tired as all hell, having
slept the night at a woman's house on the other
side of the river. whatever sleep i managed
wasn't much to speak of. my father
offered me some wood, locust, for
the fireplace here, and gladly i accepted.
he told me there was a lot of chinese
cabbage and carrots too, and these i also
latched onto without a moment's hesitation.
seems i'm always unaware of what
exactly is currently growing in the garden.
if i were handed a basketful of
mangoes and papaya and passion fruit,
i wouldn't blink. while
washing my hands in the garage, before
my father came in, my mother
came out from the kitchen and slipped
me a hundred dollar bill, and
told me that it was for my birthday.
when she went back i told the cat
about the woman whom i had spent
the night with, but the cat
ignored me, licking its paw and
letting its eyelids fall.
i've been thinking about turning
fifty soon. not this birthday,
but soon enough. crazy
and unsettling dreams in this
woman's bed. her tailbone
juts out very sharply.
out by the woodpile
my father and i had watched
two of those
walkingstick insects
mating.